

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 00833 060838Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 /082 W
-----066648 060857Z /20

R 060720Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2780
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASRCY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0833

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, US, QA
SUBJECT: AMIR OF QATAR ON MID EAST; RELATIONS WITH U.S.;
INTERNAL, DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY AFFAIRS, ETC.

1. DURING JULY 5 FAREWELL CALL, AMIR OF QATAR, SHAYKH KHALIFA BIN HAMAD ALL THANI, THANKED ME FOR MY CONTRIBUTION TO STRENGTHENING US-GOQ RELATIONS DURING PAST 3 YEARS AS FIRST RESIDENT US AMBASSADOR. IN ENSUING GENERAL DISCUSSION, KHALIFA TOUCHED ON SUBJECTS OUTLINED BELOW.
2. MID EAST: AMIR REITERATED HIS FAMILIAR VIEWS ON AREA SITUATION. HE SAID SOLUTION OF ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE MUST HAVE TOP PRIORITY SINCE AREA MOST DANGEROUS AND TROUBLESOME SPOT IN WORLD. MID EAST SETTLEMENT, ACCORDING KHALIFA, WILL CATALYZE SOLVING OF ALL OTHER INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS AND, MOST IMPORTANT, BLOCK SOVIET EXPANSIONIST AMBITIONS. KHALIFA WARNED THAT SOVIETS WERE DETERMINED

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TO BRING SADAT DOWN. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY EGYPTIANS THAT DURING RECENT FAHMY VISIT TO MOSCOW SOVIETS HAD DEMANDED RE-INSTATEMENT OF FRIENDSHIP TREATY AS PRICE FOR ANY MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID. KHALIFA ASSERTED THAT SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA, PARTICULARLY IN HORN, WERE INDIRECT THRUST AT VITAL MID EAST, SPECIFICALLY ARABIAN PENINSULA. RE US POLICY, AMIR HAD HIGH PRAISE FOR PRESIDENT'S DETERMINATION TO STAKE OUT ELEMENTS OF

JUST SETTLEMENT, BUT SAID THAT ARABS MUST NOW CONVINCE U.S. PUBLIC, AND ESPECIALLY JSCONGRESS, THAT AFAB CAUSE IS JUST AND THAT ARABS SINCERELY WANT PEACE WITH ISRAEL TO BRING FULL USG INFLUENCE TO BEAR.

3. US-GOQ RELATIONS: AMIR SAID THAT RESIDENT AMBASSADOR WITH FULL MISSION HAD UNDOUBTEDLY STRENGTHENED OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS DURING PAST 3 YEARS, AND HE THANKED ME AND MY STAFF FOR OUR EFFORTS. AMIR SPECIFIED THAT MY SUCCESSOR MUST BE AN ARABIST WITH AREA EXPERIENCE TO BEST BUILD ON RELATIONSHIPS ALREADY ESTABLISHED. HE NEEDLED ME GOOD HUMOREDLY ABOUT WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS WASHINGTON'S "LACK OF INTEREST" IN QATAR DESPITE BEST EFFORTS OF EMBASSY, BUT EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING THAT PRIORITY US INTEREST IN THIS AREA WAS SAUDI ARABIA, AND THIS IS AS IT SHOULD BE. KHALIFA OBSERVED

THAT CLOSE SAUDI-US TIES WERE OF KEY IMPORTANCE TO ALL GULF STATES, BUT VOICED HOPE THAT WE WOULD HAVE A LITTLE MORE TIME FOR QATAR IN THE FUTURE.

4. ENERGY: KHALIFA STATED THAT THERE MUST BE ACCELERATED SEARCH FOR FORMS OF ENERGY ALTERNATE TO PETROLEUM SO THAT THIS VALUABLE RESOURCE CAN BE CONSERVED. HE CLAIMED THAT GOQ WAS IN RELATIVELY GOOD SHAPE, WITH RESERVES THAT WOULD LAST "FIFTY YEARS" AND HUGE POTENTIAL NON-ASSOCIATED GAS RESOURCES. HE SAID HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT DEVELOPING US TECHNOLOGY IN EXTRACTING HEAVY OILS COULD BE USED IN QATAR, WHOSE RESERVES COULD BE INCREASED BY WHAT

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HE DESCRIBED AS POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF HEAVY OILS INDICATED BY RECENT EXPLORATIONS.

5. INTERNAL: AMIR SAID THAT HPI WAS ENGAGED IN MASSIVE REORGANIZATION OF GOQ, AND THIS WOULD PROBABLY PRECLUDE HIS TAKING ANY VACATION AT ALL THIS SUMMER. HE SAID IT WAS HIS INTENTION TO STREAMLINE THE BUREAUCRACY TO CUT DOWN ON COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS WHICH MULTIPLIED OPPORTUNITIES FOR "THIEVING HANDS".

6. FUTURE OF QATAR: AMIR PHILOSOPHIZED ON HIS VIEW OF FUTURE OF COUNTRY, REPEATING HIS FAMILIAR THEME THAT DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES HAD TOP PRIORITY. HE EMPHASIZED HIS INTEREST IN SCIENCE EDUCATION, AND NOTED WITH PRIDE DEVELOPMENT OF FULL UNIVERSITY SO THAT QATARI STUDENTS COULD RECEIVE EXCELLENT UNDER-GRADUATE EDUCATION AT HOME BEFORE GOING ABROAD FOR SPECIALIZATION. AMIR OBSERVED THAT IT WAS HIS INTENTION TO MODERNIZE THIS SMALL STATE IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FIELDS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF ISLAM'S TRADITIONAL VALUES. HE WAS CRITICAL OF BOTH RADICAL LIBERALIZERS AND RELIGIOUS CONSERVATIVES, STATING THAT QATAR WOULD TRAVEL EVOLUTIONARY MIDDLE COURSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DISPUTES, POLITICAL SITUATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DOHA00833
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770239-0201
Format: TEL
From: DOHA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770789/aaaaczee.tel
Line Count: 115
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6dc0b370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1955805
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMIR OF QATAR ON MID EAST; RELATIONS WITH U.S.; INTERNAL, DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY AFFAIRS, ETC.
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, XF, US, QA, (THANI, KHALIFA IBN HAMAD AL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6dc0b370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009